SCYTHE
AUTOMA

DESIGNER: MORTEN MONRAD PEDERSEN
ASSISTANT DESIGNER: DAVID STUDLEY
SPECIAL ADVISOR: LINES J. HUTTER

When you don't have the time, option, or desire to get a gaming group together, don't worry. We have you covered. This rulebook introduces an artificial opponent called the Automa to Scythe, so that it can be played solitaire.

COMPONENTS

19 Automa cards | **4 Automa star tracker cards** | **8 Automa reference cards**

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *This solo variant traces its origin to the Tuscany expansion pack for Viticulture, a game set in premodern Italy. As we designed that variant, we wanted a word to describe the artificial opponent. "Automa"—the Italian word for "automaton"—was perfect, and continues to live on in Scythe.*

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *Experimental rules for playing with any number of human and Automa players (max. 5 total) can be found here: https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/1469589*

THE AUTOMA

As the player, you follow the same rules as you would in a game against another human. The Automa, however, follows a simplified rule set, purposely designed to reduce the burden of running the Automa.

The Automa:

- Does not have recruits, structures, upgrades, or objective cards.
- Never changes its popularity.
- Does not produce resources.
- Does not pay any costs to take actions.
- Does not use tunnels.
- Uses no faction or mech abilities from its faction mat.
- Has no player mat.
- Treats lakes as normal territories (hexes) and can cross any river after a specific point is reached in the game.
- Retreats combat units to its faction mat.
- Places its stars differently.

You do not need to memorize these differences; they'll be repeated in the relevant rulebook sections.

SETUP

Player setup is done as normal for you. The game board and cards are set up as for a 2-player game (use 3 Factory cards). For the Automa do the following:

- Give the Automa a faction mat for a faction of your choice, based on the kind of game experience you want. For your first game, we recommend you choose a faction with a home base far away from your faction's home base.
- Give the Automa power and combat cards as specified on its mat (place them face down without looking at them).
- Give the Automa 5 coins.
- Place the Automa's popularity token on the 10 space of the popularity track. It will never leave that space.
- Place 2 workers and the character onto the board, just as you would for a human player.
- Place mechs, stars, and the remaining workers on its faction mat.
- Pick one of the four Automa star tracker cards to set the difficulty. Place a tech cube on the space marked "I" on the star track. It's strongly recommended that you use the "Autometta" star tracker card until you've beaten the Automa at that level at least once. (Note: The star tracker cards have different names for your opponent, but this rulebook will use the term "the Automa" generically for all difficulty levels.)
- Shuffle the deck of 19 Automa cards and place it face-down with room for two discard piles beside it (the main, and the combat discard pile). Organize the cards so they are all facing the same direction with the "I" at the top.

AUTOMA TURNS

You take the first turn, followed by the Automa. You'll continue to alternate turns throughout the game until one of you places their sixth star. Each of the Automa's turns is controlled by an Automa card.

AUTOMA CARDS

SAMPLE AUTOMA CARD

- The green part of the card is called Scheme I and this scheme will be used at the beginning of the game. After a specific event takes place, the deck will be rotated 180 degrees, and the Automa uses the red part, called Scheme II, for the remainder of the game (this switch is described in further detail in "Stars and the Scheme Switch".) The scheme currently at the top is the active scheme and determines what actions the Automa has cooked up for the current turn.
- The gray star with the red X in the middle of the card means that you should not advance the token on the star tracker card.
- If you turn the card sideways, the Combat Table at the bottom left is used to resolve combat.
- The Resource Box close to the bottom on the left determines the number of resources to place on a territory if you conquer a territory from the Automa.
- The Combat Table and Resource Box is used independent of which Scheme is active and the background color has no effect on them

If you ever need to draw a card and there are none left in the Automa deck, reshuffle all 19 cards from the two discard piles and then draw.

STEPS IN AN AUTOMA TURN

An Automa turn consists of the following steps:

1. **DRAW AN AUTOMA CARD** and place it face-up on top of the main discard pile with the active scheme at the top. If you're playing the Autometta difficulty and ☠ is in the first row of the active scheme, then skip this Automa turn.
2. **FOLLOW THE ACTIVE SCHEME** from top to bottom:
   - A. Perform a single Automa **Move action.**
   - B. The Automa **gains stuff.**
   - C. You may receive a **recruit bonus.**
3. **UPDATE THE STAR TRACKER** if indicated to advance the Automa's progress towards another star.

PERFORMING MOVE ACTIONS (STEP 2A)

The symbols in the first row of the scheme tell you what Move actions to attempt (at most, one will be performed). Do the following:

- Starting with the leftmost symbol, evaluate whether the symbol instructs the Automa to make a valid Move action. If the Move action is invalid, proceed to the next symbol in the row.
  NOTE: Letting a unit "move" to the territory it is already on can be a valid move.
- As soon as a valid move is made, **carry out no further actions on this row.**
- If no symbols in the first row produce a valid Move action, then the Automa performs no Move action this turn.
- Actions in brackets with a faction icon are **only considered if the Automa is playing that faction.**

Once the token on the star tracker card has left the spaces with a (see "Update the Star Tracker Card"), all Automa units (including workers) treat lakes like normal territories and can cross any river. Until that happens, Automa units are confined to their faction's peninsula.

When selecting a unit to move, the Automa picks a unit closest to its home base. When placing a unit, if multiple territories are equivalent options, then the Automa picks a territory nearest to the Factory: The Automa wants to move away from its home base and concentrate its units around the Factory.

In cases where ties are not broken by proximity to the home base or the Factory, choose the unit or territory that would come first if you were going through the territories on the board in normal English reading order. That is, start with the leftmost territory in the top row, and go towards the right, then the row below, etc. (See "Move Worker" for an example of this rule in effect.)

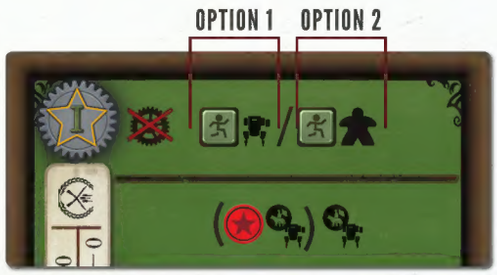
All Move actions follow the same five-step procedure and involve a concept called neighborhoods.

NOTE: In Scythe, attack actions are also considered Move actions.

NOTE: The Move action is performed before the gain stuff actions, and thus units can't be moved in the same turn that they're acquired.

NOTE: As in multi-player, the game ends immediately after someone places their sixth star. Therefore, if an action on an Automa card leads to the sixth star being placed, the remaining actions on the card are not performed.

Example of an Automa card with two possible Move actions. The leftmost symbol indicates that the Automa will skip the turn, if you're playing the Autometta level.



DESIGNER'S NOTE: *The movement system has a learning curve and the first time you play, it will take some time. As you gain experience, the process will speed up dramatically as you see that there's no need to go over every possible territory. You'll learn to spot which territories are relevant for consideration. E.g., for the Move Worker action, you'll focus only on the areas where the Automa already has many units and for move mech/character, you'll focus only on the territories close to human player's combat units. In most cases, you'll be able to visually identify 1–4 territories that could be relevant, while all others can be ignored.*

NEIGHBORHOODS

The *neighborhood* of a unit is the territory the unit is on, plus the territories the unit can reach by a movement of one territory. With a few exceptions, this will simply be the territory the unit is on and the six territories surrounding it.

Units on home bases do not have neighborhoods. But, the Automa's home base itself does have a neighborhood consisting of the two territories adjacent to it on the home peninsula.

ILLUSTRATION OF EXAMPLE 1: The neighborhood of a Crimean mech controlled by a **human player.**

ILLUSTRATION OF EXAMPLE 2: The neighborhood of an **Automa unit** after it has gotten the ability to move over water.

EXAMPLE 1: The illustration above shows the neighborhood of a Crimean mech controlled by a human player, who has deployed the mech giving the Riverwalk ability (the Crimean faction can cross rivers to farms ( ) and tundra ( ). Here are the reasons for whether or not each space is in the mech's neighborhood.

A: Directly connected by land.

B: The unit's current territory is in its neighborhood.

C: Units of a human player with the Crimean faction can't move onto lakes.

D: These territories are separated by a river that the Crimean faction can't cross.

E: The Crimean faction can cross rivers to tundra ( ).

EXAMPLE 2: If the same unit from the previous example had been an Automa mech and if the Automa had gained the ability to move over water (see "Update the Star Tracker Card"), then the neighborhood would be the territory it's on plus the six surrounding territories.

AUTOMA TELEPORTATION

From Encyclopedia Automa: It's a well-known fact that all Automa units carry what scholars commonly refer to as Automa Teleport Gateways, which allow any Automa unit to teleport to the location of any other Automa unit instantly, after which they can then continue moving through conventional means. How they accomplish this feat is still a hotly debated topic, with theories including quantum tunneling, wormholes and warp space travel.

In game terms, this means that all Automa units can move to any space in the neighborhood of any Automa unit using their single Move action.

MOVE ACTION SYMBOLS EXPLAINED

The sections below will explain each of the Move action symbols.

Remember that action symbols in brackets with a faction icon are only considered if the Automa is playing that faction. E.g. ( ) would lead to a worker being moved if the Automa is playing the Nordic faction. If the Automa is playing as any other faction, the action would be ignored.

If the faction action can be performed, then the other Move actions on the card are not attempted.

MOVE WORKER

1. **SELECT UNIT:** The Automa worker closest to the Automa's home base.

   TIEBREAKER: Normal reading order.

2. **DETERMINE VALID TERRITORIES:** Territories in the neighborhood of any Automa unit or its home base, which do not contain an enemy unit or Automa worker other than the one selected in step 1.

3. **PICK UP THE SELECTED WORKER.**

4. **CHOOSE DESTINATION TERRITORY:** The valid territory that is in the neighborhood of the most Automa units and isn't in the neighborhood of enemy combat units.

   TIEBREAKER 1: The territory closest to the Factory.

   TIEBREAKER 2: Normal reading order.

5. **PLACE SELECTED WORKER** on the destination territory.

ILLUSTRATION FOR EXAMPLE 3: Move Worker action.

EXAMPLE 3: The illustration above shows a Move Worker action.

The first step is to select a unit. This must be the worker closest to the Automa's home base, but, in this case, two workers are closest (marked with boxes in the illustration above).

Since there are two valid units, the tiebreaker is applied: Normal English reading order, so we go through the territories from the top left "reading" the rows one by one, left to right. The first worker we meet is the one in the green box and thus, that is the unit selected for this action.

The next step is to determine valid territories. For the Move Worker action, valid territories are the territories in the neighborhood of any Automa unit (including the selected unit), which do not contain another Automa worker unit or an enemy unit. All valid territories are identified in the illustration by having a number printed on them.

We now pick up the selected worker from the board (thus it influenced what territories are valid, but it won't influence which one is selected as the destination).

For the Move Worker action the rule for choosing the destination is "The valid territory that is in the neighborhood of the most Automa units and isn't in the neighborhood of the human player's combat units."

For each valid territory, we count how many other Automa units could move to the territory in a one-territory move (that is, how many have the valid territory in their neighborhood).

The numbers on the valid territories in the illustration above show the neighbor count for each valid territory.

Five is the highest number of neighboring units, thus the selected worker will be placed onto the territory with the green "5" as indicated by the arrow.

Note: Territories marked with an * cannot be chosen, because they're in the neighborhood of enemy combat units.

We're here assuming that the human player has unlocked the Riverwalk ability.

NON-ATTACKING MOVE MECH OR NON-ATTACKING MOVE CHARACTER

1. **SELECT UNIT:** The character or mech (as depicted by the icon on the Automa card) closest to the Automa's home base.

   TIEBREAKER: Normal reading order.

2. **VALID TERRITORIES:** Territories in the neighborhood of any Automa unit or its home base, which do not contain an enemy unit or Automa combat unit other than the one selected in step 1.

3. **PICK UP THE SELECTED MECH OR CHARACTER.**

4. **CHOOSE DESTINATION TERRITORY:** The valid territory that is the shortest distance from an enemy combat unit (enemy combat units on home bases are ignored unless no enemy combat units are on the board itself).

   TIEBREAKER 1: The territory closest to the Factory.

   TIEBREAKER 2: Normal reading order.

5. **PLACE SELECTED MECH OR CHARACTER** on the destination territory.

ILLUSTRATION FOR EXAMPLE 4: Non-attacking Move Mech action.

ENCOUNTER/FACTORY

1. **SELECT UNIT:** The Automa's character.

2. **VALID TERRITORIES:** Territories in the neighborhood of any Automa unit that contain the Factory (if the Automa has no Factory card) or an encounter token.

3. **PICK UP THE CHARACTER.**

4. **CHOOSE DESTINATION TERRITORY:** Any valid territory without an enemy unit or an Automa mech.

   TIEBREAKER 1: The territory closest to Factory.

   TIEBREAKER 2: Normal reading order.

5. **PLACE SELECTED UNIT** on the destination territory.

If the character ever ends its Move action on a territory with an encounter token (whether it took the Encounter/Factory action or not), remove the encounter token. If the character ends its turn on the Factory, and the Automa doesn't have a Factory card, then draw a random Factory card and place it face down by the Automa's faction mat.

EXAMPLE 4: The image above illustrates the non-attacking Move Mech action. The mech in the green box will be selected because it's the mech closest to the Automa's home base.

Valid territories have numbers indicating their shortest distance to an enemy combat unit. The green number indicates that the Factory will be chosen. Of the territories with a minimum distance (1) to the human player's combat units, it's closest to the Factory (well, duh).

ATTACK MOVE VS. COMBAT UNIT

CONDITION: The Automa will only attack if its power is at least **X** (the number printed next to the combat icon in the action symbol).

1. **SELECT UNIT:** The Automa combat unit closest to the Automa's home base.

   TIEBREAKER: Normal reading order.

2. **VALID TERRITORIES:** Any territory in the neighborhood of any Automa unit or its home base, which contains an enemy combat unit.

3. **PICK UP THE SELECTED COMBAT UNIT.**

4. **CHOOSE DESTINATION TERRITORY:** The valid territory with the fewest enemy combat units.

   TIEBREAKER 1: The territory closest to the Factory.

   TIEBREAKER 2: Normal reading order.

5. **PLACE SELECTED UNIT** on the destination territory.

See "Combat" (page 10) for instructions on how to resolve combat with the Automa.

ATTACK MOVE VS. WORKER

1. **SELECT UNIT:** The Automa combat unit closest to the Automa's home base.

   TIEBREAKER: Normal reading order.

2. **VALID TERRITORIES:** Any territory in the neighborhood of any Automa unit or its home base, which has an enemy worker but no combat unit.

3. **PICK UP THE SELECTED COMBAT UNIT.**

4. **CHOOSE DESTINATION TERRITORY:** The valid territory with the most resources (zero resources qualifies if no valid territory has resources).

   TIEBREAKER 1: The territory closest to Factory.

   TIEBREAKER 2: Normal reading order.

5. **PLACE SELECTED UNIT** on the destination territory.

Remove any resources from the contested territory and return the worker(s) to your home base.

THE AUTOMA GAINS STUFF (STEP 2B)

After performing the Move action, resolve the second row of the scheme: For **each** symbol present, perform the action next to the symbol in the list below.

Actions in brackets with a faction icon are only carried out if the Automa is playing that faction. E.g. for ( ) the Automa only gains an extra deploy mech/character action if it plays the Rusviet faction.

: Deploy a worker from the Automa's faction mat (if any are left) to the Automa's home base.
NOTE: It doesn't go to a village like it would for a human player.

: If the Automa's character is on its faction mat, then deploy it to the Automa's home base. If not then deploy a mech from the Automa's faction mat (if any are left) to the Automa's home base.

: Give the Automa a coin.

: Increase the Automa's power by one.

: Give the Automa a combat card face-down.

RECRUIT BONUS (STEP 2C)

After you've resolved the first two rows of the scheme, move on to the third—the recruit bonus. When there's a recruit icon ( ) shown on the third line, it will be followed by either a power, coin, popularity, or combat card icon. If you have enlisted the recruit with the corresponding Recruit Ongoing Bonus, then you gain that bonus. (E.g. if a power symbol is shown and you have the gain power Recruit Ongoing Bonus active, then you gain one power.)

The recruit bonus provides no benefit for the Automa, since it doesn't have recruits.

UPDATE THE STAR TRACKER (STEP 3)

In the "Update the star tracker" step of the Automa's turn, if there is a symbol in the center of the card, move the token on the star tracker card one space to the right. If it's already at the rightmost space, then move the token to the leftmost space of the row immediately below it.

If there's a symbol, the token is not moved.

As long as the token is on a space with a , Automa units **cannot use lakes or cross rivers.** Once the token has advanced past those spaces, then all Automa units:

- Treat lakes as normal territories.
- Can cross any river.

STARS AND THE SCHEME SWITCH

If the token on the star tracker card is placed on a complete star ( ), take a star from the Automa's faction mat and place it next to the Triumph Track.

The first time the Automa gains a star this way ( ) you do two things:

- Shuffle the discard piles into the deck to create a new full deck. Rotate the deck 180 degrees so, in future draws, Scheme II is shown on the top of the card.
- Switch to using Scheme II on the Automa cards for the remainder of the game.

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *The choice of which stars the Automa places like a human player is based on whether you, as a human player, can have a meaningful impact on whether the Automa gets these stars. The things that you can't affect have been abstracted into the star tracker to reduce the burden of running the Automa.*

There are two other ways the Automa can place stars:

- Up to two stars can be placed on the triumph track for winning a combat.
  NOTE: Even when the Automa is the Saxony faction, it can only place a maximum of two combat stars, since the Automa doesn't use faction abilities.
- A star is placed on the triumph track the first time the Automa reaches the end of the power track.

NOTE: A star placement from combat or for reaching the end of the power track does not trigger the switch to Scheme II.

These are the only ways that the Automa places stars.

COMBAT

Attacks are handled similarly to the multi-player game with the major exception being the way the Automa decides how much power and how many combat cards use. Any rule not explicitly overridden below is still in effect.

If you move one of your combat units to a territory containing only an Automa worker, remove that worker to the Automa's home base and reduce your popularity as in the multi-player game. Then, you must check to see if you can claim any resources on the territory as described in "Resolving Resources" below.

When combat happens between combat units, use this procedure:

1. Choose your combat power and combat cards.
2. Draw an Automa card and place it sideways on the combat discard pile. Only the combat table on the bottom left is used. Ignore all other information on this card.
3. Find the power range in the top row of the combat table that corresponds to the Automa's current power.
4. The number below the Automa's combat power range shows how much power the Automa will use in combat. If it has less power than indicated, it will use as much as is available.
5. In addition to its power, the Automa will add a number of random combat cards from its deck as indicated by the amount of combat card symbol(s) in the combat section of the card (anywhere from 0-3 cards). If it has less cards than indicated, it plays as many cards as it can.
6. If the Automa loses the combat, then retreat its combat unit (character/mech) to the **faction mat instead of the home base.**

Following combat, you must check to see if you claimed any resources on the disputed territory, as described in "Resolving Resources" below.

Everything else, including determining the winner, reducing power, returning workers to the home base, and letting the loser gain a combat card is done as in the normal combat procedure.

EXAMPLE 5: The Automa has 12 power and draws a card with the following combat section:

Since the Automa has a power value of 12, it uses 5 power and 2 combat cards.

Alternatively, if it had only 1 power, it would only use 1 power and 2 cards.

The table below shows the distribution of the number of combats cards used in a combat across all 19 Automa cards.

COMBAT CARDS USED	NUMBER OF AUTOMA CARDS WITH THIS NUMBER OF COMBAT CARD SYMBOLS
0 CARDS	4
1 CARD	9
2 CARDS	5
3 CARDS	1

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *Sometimes players forget whether they have moved the token along the star tracker. Placing Automa cards used for combat in a separate discard pile allows you to check if the marker on the star tracker card is on the correct space by counting the ★ symbols on the cards in the main discard pile.*

RESOLVING RESOURCES

Since the Automa doesn't use resources, an extra step is taken after combat to simulate Automa resources on the board.

If you were the attacker and won (or if you moved into a space with only an Automa worker), then take the last discarded Automa card not used for combat (i.e. the card on top of the main discard pile) and find the number of resources shown in the Resource Box. Place resources equal to that number, onto the contested territory, of the type produced there. If the conquered territory is a lake, village, or the Factory, then no resources are placed, since those territories don't produce resources. If there were multiple combats on different territories within one turn, the same card is used to resolve resources for those territories.

EXAMPLE: If the above card was on top of the main discard pile, you would place 1 resource on the territory(es).

If you're forced to reshuffle to draw the combat card, then it's a good idea to place the resource you could win in the territory before the reshuffle, so that you can remember how many resources are in play.

If the Automa was the attacker and won, or if it moved onto a territory with just workers or just resources, then remove all resources from the territory.

SCORING

The Automa scores coins as if it were a human player:

- 4 coins per star placed, including those outside the triumph track.
- 3 coins per territory controlled.

Since it doesn't produce resources or build structures, it doesn't gain coins for these.

You score as in the multi-player game, except that for resources you score a maximum of 6 resources per territory.

The winner is determined as usual, except that resources are not used to break ties.

ADJUSTING THE DIFFICULTY & AUTOMA PERSONALITY

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *Scythe is a game that allows for different play styles. If players like to build up their engine peacefully, they can do so with limited conflict. If, on the other hand, they like confrontational games, Scythe Automa accommodates that style, as well.*

The Automa is designed to be fairly aggressive, but we want it to support various play style preferences as in the multi-player game. There are several options to tailor the play experience to your taste. We strongly encourage you to experiment and find your favorite way to play.

Your choice of distance between the factions' home bases has an impact on gameplay, as does the star tracker card you select. The latter determines the basic difficulty level:

AUTOMETTA is for beginners and players who want to have a lot of time to build up their engine.

AUTOMA is the normal difficulty.

AUTOMASZYNA is for veterans.

ULTIMASZYNA (see special rules below) is for those who are better than the Automa design team.

Furthermore, you can customize the difficulty and personality of the Automa by using any of the following rule changes:

- Skip Automa turns as on the Autometta difficulty level, but use the Automa or Automaszyna star tracker cards.
- Each time the Automa gains coins, give it one or two coins more or less than the number listed on the Automa card. It can never get a negative number of coins.
- Each time the Automa gains power, give it one or two power more or less than what is listed on the card. It can never lose power through negative modifiers.
- Every time the Automa would move a unit, flip over a combat card from the deck on the board. If it's a 4 or 5, the Automa takes no Move action this turn from the first row of the scheme.
- Every time the Automa would deploy a unit, flip over a combat card from the pile on the board. If it's a 4 or 5, the Automa doesn't deploy the unit.
- Instead of only performing one Move action per card, perform all the Move actions of the scheme. When playing with this rule, the Automa takes encounter tokens and the Factory card as soon as the character enters the territory, instead of at the end of the turn and will often leave the territory again the same turn via a move character action.

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *A few of the playtesters rose above the skill level of the rest of us and for them we created Ultimaszyna.*

ULTIMASZYNA is a special difficulty level for the best of the best:

- Ultimaszyna's units are not restricted by water at any time and so can leave their home peninsula from the start of the game.
- Ultimaszyna takes all the valid Move actions on the Automa cards instead of just the first valid one. Resolve each action fully before moving on to the next. When playing with this rule, the Automa takes encounter tokens and the Factory card as soon as the character enters the territory, instead of at the end of the turn and will often leave the territory again the same turn via a move character action.
- After losing combat, Ultimaszyna combat units are moved to the Automa's home base instead of the faction mat.
- Ultimaszyna gains one extra coin each time an Automa card gives it one or more coins.
- Ultimaszyna gains one extra power each time an Automa card gives it one or more power.

DESIGNER'S NOTE: *If you're interested in solo gaming you can follow my blog on www.automafactory.com*

Automa Factory

STONEMAIER GAMES

© 2015 Stonemaier LLC. Scythe is a trademark of Stonemaier LLC. All Rights Reserved.